

that it is open season on others simply because they are of a different color or different sexual orientation? I do not believe we should engage in an exercise of self-flagellation, but I do believe it is incumbent upon each of us to examine the words we use, the statements we condone, the rhetoric of bigotry we sometimes hear and simply let pass without condemnation because we are preoccupied with other things. We must not tolerate a message of hatred in our midst. We must not give bigotry the fertile soil it needs to flourish.

A loving God has gathered Matthew Shepard to his bosom. He will never face such hate again. That same God may grant his mercy and forgiveness to those who killed him but a harsher justice awaits them in this life.

#### SCHOOL VIOLENCE

(Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN. Mr. Speaker, later this week the President will convene a conference to address the issue of school violence.

Mr. Speaker, we can reduce school violence if we have smaller classes where teachers can spend time with each student and identify those who need special intervention. We can prevent school violence if our schools are positive centers of learning and our children are given the tools they need to excel. And we can prevent school violence if our school buildings are just safe, clean and in good repair.

Mr. Speaker, we can get our arms around this problem and more importantly around our children if we pass bills that will increase the number of teachers, reduce class size and build or renovate our schools. We must save our children. We must pass the President's education budget.

#### TAX REDUCTION

(Mr. WHITFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago this House passed a modest tax reduction for hard working middle class Americans. President Clinton and the Democratic leadership vigorously opposed the tax reduction. They said they opposed it because they incorrectly, I might say, claimed it would take money from Social Security. However, in the last minute back room negotiations on the omnibus appropriation bill, the President and Democratic leadership are not expressing any concern for Social Security. Instead they want to spend billions more of taxpayer dollars for foreign aid, for their favorite environmental programs and for the education bureaucracy in Washington while we want to send it to local school boards.

The President does not want to give the American taxpayers a small tax reduction. Instead he wants to keep the

tax dollars in the government and let them spend money on programs he wants. Once again the President and Democrat leadership say one thing in public but they demand something entirely different in private negotiations.

#### RECORD OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, in communities all over America, we are trying to support public education, involve parents, improve the quality of education, support professional educators. This Congress has not done its share. Indeed, when this Congress goes home, if we let it go without supporting public education and the Members of Congress wave bye-bye out at the airport, they will be recognizing about the only accomplishment of this Congress, which is the renaming of the airport here in Washington.

The reason nothing has been done is that the priorities greatly differ between Democrats and Republicans. Republicans want to abolish the Department of Education. Republicans want to take money away from public schools and give those monies, those public monies to elite academies.

We believe the time is now to stand for this Congress doing something positively to support local communities who want to improve the quality of public education. That is what this budget battle is all about. Let us stand firmly for public schools and stand firmly against a do-nothing Congress that has nothing at this point to point to as an accomplishment.

#### MORE ON THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL PLANS

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, we have been working on education all year. Indeed in this budget it appears the amounts have been set and we are just negotiating the fine details of where it is going to be put.

The question is why we are here right now, since we knew we were going to come to these straits earlier on this year and we knew what our differences were earlier on. Saturday the President said in his radio address, I do not want to see this Congress walk away from America's school children. Then he went out to play golf for a couple hours. Then he walked away all of yesterday and into last night for two fund-raisers in New York.

Today the Vice President flew out down to Palm Beach, Florida for a fund-raiser down there. Then he goes to Miami for a fund-raiser. Then he goes to Coral Gables for a fund-raiser. In between he talks at a school in Miami

about the need for us to deal with school kids.

Mr. Speaker, the President and the Vice President should have been dealing with the education issue and working out the differences between an elected House and an elected Senate and an elected President and Vice President a long time ago, not trotting off and doing fund-raisers and press conferences.

#### THE REASON WE ARE HERE TODAY

(Mr. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the reason we are here today is because of the differences between the Republicans and the Democrats about our children's education. We believe, as the American people do, that our local districts need help in rebuilding crumbling schools, that our schools ought to be made safe, that children should no longer go to school in made-over closets and made-over teacher lounges, in made-over storage areas. They ought to have a safe and decent place to go to school.

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We believe that we ought to make every effort to try to help districts lower the teacher/pupil ratio so that teachers can spend more time with individual students. That is the important work that ought to be done here. It should have been done earlier, but the Republicans were so excited about impeachment that they forgot America's children. That work has to be done.

The problem is there are even differences within the Republican Party about this education program. We believe that this money ought to make sure that we can, in fact, reduce class size. We can, in fact, build new schools and repair schools and make a difference for America's children as opposed to trying to provide a program that allows governors to walk off with the money

#### BEST WISHES FOR FORMER CONGRESSMAN DANTE FASCELL

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, all of us in this chamber and back home in South Florida send our best wishes to our former House colleague, Congressman Dante Fascell.

For almost 40 years, Dante Fascell led the charge in the House of Representatives for respect for human rights internationally and fostering democracy and freedom throughout the world.

As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Congressman Fascell worked tirelessly in a bipartisan manner to promote our American ideals of

justice and liberty to the oppressed people everywhere, especially to the suffering people of native Cuba.

Dante was key in assuring and maintaining aid to Israel, our only democratic ally in the Middle East. He led the charge in condemning the Soviet Union's mistreatment of Jews. He also left his mark on domestic policy as well.

Congressman Fascell created the Everglades National Park; and without his vision, we would not have the River of Grass as a national treasure. Dante helped build my hometown of Miami to the thriving metropolis it is now. He worked to get South Florida the necessary Federal funds that helped our community grow.

All of us in South Florida cherish his friendship and want him to continue enjoying his children and his family for years to come.

#### EDUCATION IS THE SEED CORN OF SOCIETY

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, sometimes the American public may wonder why we are focusing on education in the Democratic Party. In the Plains Indians in the central part of this country, there is a well-known bit of wisdom that says that they can tell a tribe that is going to die when they eat the seed corn, when you eat the corn that has to be saved for the spring and plant for the new crop.

Education is the seed corn of this society. Our determination to make this session end by an investment in education, both in the classrooms in terms of reducing class size and in rebuilding the buildings, is the seed corn of this society.

If we fail to do that, we will come out here, as we do every year, and pass a bill for H-1B visas so that we can go worldwide and gather the brains that we need to run this economy. That is wrong. That is not investing in the seed corn. We need to stay and do education.

#### FEDERALIZING SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION IS BAD IDEA

(Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, is the President's school construction program a good idea or is it a gift to his urban fund-raising friends?

There are 15,600 school districts in America. Half the money is designated for 100 urban poor. There are urban poor, but there are rural poor, too. There are 1,000 rural poor school districts with no funding.

The other half of the money is available to additional urban poor districts. You can bet his urban fund-raising

friends will receive the majority of those funds, too, and 15,400 rural school districts across America will receive nothing.

Federalizing school construction will delay by several years the ability to construct the schools, will increase the cost, and only help the President's fund-raising friends.

#### SUPPORT EDUCATION

(Mr. BALDACCI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, in reference to the gentleman that just spoke in regards to the classrooms, I know, in our State, we did an analysis, and almost \$200 million is going to be needed to increase the safety because of lead in the drinking water in school, because of the asbestos around the pipes, to increase the safety in environment for our children.

Because as we try to decrease the class size so that they can learn more, they can be more disciplined there, they have to have the environment so that they are not gaining any other outside hazards.

In the relationship to the young man who died from the hate crime in Wyoming, I think it points back to the fact that, by increasing discipline, by reducing class size, we are going to increase the likelihood where children will be raised differently, and they will not have these problems stemming from lack of supervision.

So by reducing the class size, we are reducing the violence. By reducing the class size, we are increasing the education children get and raising their aspirations so that, in my state, the fourth and eighth graders who are doing tops in the country can have the aspirations to go on to college and to reach the American dream.

That is why we support education, and that is why education is in support of programs.

#### ELECTION YEAR SPINNING

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to caution everybody watching this program, all of the voters in this country to brace yourself for the next couple 3 weeks before the election.

Look, I think the proudest moment of this Congress was probably last year when Republicans and Democrats and the President worked together to lower taxes for the first time since Ronald Reagan came in, to balance the budget for the first time in 31 years.

But what happens as we get close to an election is the Democrats try to prove that they think education is more important than Republicans. Not true. They try to spin it to make sure

or to hopefully make sure that they get more votes in the election.

Mr. Speaker, I just ask the American people to brace up, watch the spinning, be careful of what both sides of the aisle says, be careful of what the President says and does in these last few weeks before the election. Listen to these next speakers.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Members will be reminded that comments should not be made to the viewing audience. Comments should be made to the Speaker.

#### FOCUS ON EDUCATION

(Mr. SNYDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, I visit a lot of school districts in my district, rural, suburban and urban, and they all tell me the same thing. They need help with school construction. They need help with building new buildings. They need help with reducing class size.

The most recent one I visited made a decision some years ago to push the class size to the max in order to pay their bills. They do not like what they have done. They recognize, I am talking about both the teachers and the administrators, that there is a price the students pay. They need help. They want help.

They understand that, in order to reduce class size, they have to build new buildings. In order to reduce class size, they have to hire new teachers. They understand they will control the hiring. They will control the building. But they want help from their government, their Federal Government in doing this.

That is what this issue is about. That is why this week I hope we will focus on education, not to make partisan points, but to hopefully come out of here at the end of this week with a bill that helps the school districts in Arkansas accomplish what they want to with their school children.

#### EDUCATION IS MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

(Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, as the father of three young children, I am delighted, I am delighted that we are finally talking about an issue that is of concern to parents of young children all throughout this entire country.

Education is the most important issue for the future of this country. We have ignored it. We have ignored it for the last year. Now, finally, we get an opportunity to talk about it.